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2 December 1971

MEMORANDUM

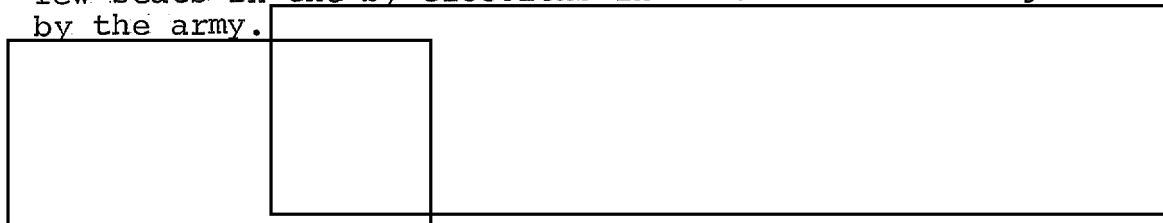
SUBJECT: The Mechanics of Transferring Power in Pakistan

1. On 12 October President Yahya announced that, following staggered by-elections early this month in East Pakistan, a constitution would be promulgated on 20 December, the National Assembly would convene on 27 December, and a civilian government would be formed almost immediately afterwards. The by-elections were to be held to fill 78 seats won by the separatist Awami League in elections a year ago, but later declared vacant by the government.

2. Reporting on the form of the new government has been vague, and it may well be that Yahya has not made a final decision. Pakistan presumably will have a parliamentary government, but to preserve military influence the President could retain substantial powers.

3. Nurul Amin will probably become prime minister. He was one of the two non-Awami Leaguers elected to the National Assembly from East Pakistan a year ago and currently heads the United Coalition Party (UCP), recently formed from seven moderate and right-wing parties. When by-elections are over, the UCP is expected to be Pakistan's largest single party, but it will fall short of having a majority.

4. Z. A. Bhutto, head of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), is expected to become deputy prime minister in a coalition government. His party won the majority of the West Pakistani seats a year ago, but has won only a few seats in the by-elections in East Pakistan managed by the army.



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PARTY STRENGTH IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

<u>Party</u>	<u>East Pakistan</u>		<u>West Pakistan</u>		<u>Total</u>
	Elected 1970	Declared 1970	Elected 1970	Elected 1970	
UCP ^a	1	49	37		87
Awami League ^b	86	--	--		86
PPP	--	6	87		93
NAP ^c	--	--	7		7
Independents	1	--	13		14
Unfilled Seats	26	--	--		26
Total		169	144		313

- a. The UCP is expected to pick up all the 24 seats yet to be decided in East Pakistan and some of the Awami Leaguers who were allowed to keep their seats. By-elections for two seats--including Mujib's--have not been scheduled, presumably because Mujib's trial is still in progress.
- b. Less than half these Awami Leaguers are expected to attend the National Assembly. Some are in India with the Bangla Desh government.
- c. The National Awami Party has been outlawed, but its members retain their seats.



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6			

ACTION	DIRECT REPLY	PREPARE REPLY
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Remarks:

Background on the situation
we discussed this morning.
RL

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